

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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PRECIOUS THOUGHTS FROM JOHN RUSKIN

THE TRUTH OF TRUTHS

TRUTH is to be discovered, and Pardon to be won for every man by himself. This is evident from innumerable texts of Scripture, but chiefly from those which exhort every man to seek after Truth, and which connect knowing with doing. We are to seek after knowledge as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures; therefore, from every man she must be naturally hid, and the discovery of her is to be the reward only of personal search. The kingdom of God is as treasure hid in a field; and of those who profess to help us to seek for it, we are not to put confidence in those who say, "Here is the treasure, we have found it, and have it, and will give you some of it"; but to those who say, "We think that is a good place to dig, and you will dig most easily in such and such a way."

Farther, it has been promised that if such earnest search be made, Truth shall be discovered: as much truth, that is, as is necessary for the person seeking. These, therefore, I hold, for two fundamental principles of religion,—that, without seeking, truth cannot be known at all; and that, by seeking, it may be discovered by the simplest. I say, without seeking it cannot be known at all. It can neither be declared from pulpits, nor set down in articles, nor in any wise "prepared and sold" in packages, ready for use. Truth must be ground for every man by himself out of its husk, with such help as he can get, indeed, but not without stern labor of his own. In what science is knowledge to be had cheap? or truth to be told over a velvet cushion, in half an hour's talk every seventh day? Can you learn chemistry so?—zoölogy?—anatomy? and do you expect to penetrate the secret of all secrets, and to know that whose price is above rubies; and of which the depth saith, "It is not in

me, in so easy fashion"? There are doubts in this matter which evil spirits darken with their wings, and that is true of all such doubts which we were told long ago—they can "be ended by action alone."

As surely as we live, this truth of truths can only so be discerned: to those who act on what they know, more shall be revealed; and thus, if any man will do His will, he shall know the doctrine whether it be of God. Any man—not the man who has most means of knowing, who has the subtlest brains, or sits under the most orthodox preacher, or has his library fullest of most orthodox books—but the man who strives to know, who takes God at His word, and sets himself to dig up the heavenly mystery, roots and all, before sunset, and the night come, when no man can work. Beside such a man, God stands in more and more visible presence as he toils, and teaches him that which no preacher can teach—no earthly authority gainsay. By such a man, the preacher must himself be judged.

GOD'S PLACE IN THE HUMAN HEART

Anything which makes religion its second object, makes religion *no* object. God will put up with a great many things in the human heart, but there is one thing He will not put up with in it—a second place. He who offers God a second place, offers Him *no* place.

DISCERNMENT OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

If we hear a man profess himself a believer in God and in Christ, and detect him in no glaring and wilful violation of God's law, we speak of him as a Christian; and, on the other hand, if we hear or see him denying Christ, either in his words or conduct, we tacitly assume him not to be a Christian. A mawkish charity prevents us from outspeaking in this matter, and from earnestly endeavoring to discern who are Christians and who are not; and this I hold to be one

of the chief sins of the Church in the present day; for thus wicked men are put to no shame; and better men are encouraged in their failings, or caused to hesitate in their virtues, by the example of those whom, in false charity, they choose to call Christians.

THE TRUE CHURCH

The Church which is composed of Faithful men is the one true, indivisible and indiscernible Church, built on the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.

A man becomes a member of this Church only by believing in Christ with all his heart; nor is he positively recognizable for a member of it, when he has become so, by any one but God, not even by himself. Nevertheless, there are certain signs by which Christ's sheep may be guessed at. Not by their being in any definite Fold—for many are lost sheep at times—but by their sheep-like behavior; and a great many are indeed sheep which, on the far mountain side, in their peacefulness, we take for stones. To themselves, the best proof of their being Christ's sheep is to find themselves on Christ's shoulders; and, between them, there are certain sympathies (expressed in the Apostles' Creed by the term "Communion of Saints"), by which they may in a sort recognize each other, and so become verily visible to each other for mutual comfort.

WILD VIOLETS

BEAUTIFUL wildwood blossoms,
Sweet is the message you bring;
Dreams of a cool, shady forest,
Filled with the odors of spring;
Breathing of murmuring streamlets
Fringed on each side by your blue;
Whispers of dear, northern meadows
A-gleam in the moonlight and dew.

Who'er would think for a moment
You, now so jaunty and trim,
Drooped in the glass where I placed you,
Leaned limp and weak o'er the brim?
Are you the same sober creatures
That erstwhile I saw lying wilt,
You, with blue heads high uplifted,
Each leaf and blossom a tilt?

Pleasing are you in your wildwood,
Bonny and dear any place,
But fairest to me thus so bravely
Uplifting your blooms from my vase.
I cannot feel lone and disheartened,
Or sit with my head bowed in gloom,
With your sweet perfume about me,
Wee captives, here in my room.

—Gazelle Stevens Sharpe.

Santa Ana, Calif.

WITH OUR HOME-KEEPERS

FAVORITE RECIPES

Brown Bread.—One-half cup molasses, 1 cup sweet milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour, $1\frac{1}{2}$ cup graham flour, 1 teaspoon soda, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon baking powder. Mix in a mixing bowl $\frac{1}{2}$ cup molasses, sweet milk, add sour milk, then add flour, salt, soda and baking powder. Steam $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Nut-Raisin Bread.—Three cups flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, 2 cups chopped nuts, 1 cup raisins, 3 teaspoons baking powder, 1 cup sweet milk. Place in bread tins and bake.

Individual Rhubarb Shortcake.—Cut the rhubarb in small pieces. If young, do not peel. Stew slowly, adding one-half sugar to each cup of rhubarb. If very tart variety, add more sugar. Cook until it is thick like jam. Let it cool, and place between plain cup cakes. Cover top also with rhubarb mixture. Serve it with cream. If you prefer soda biscuit shortcake, make biscuits and split, put between and top the same.

Baked Steak, Mutton or Lamb.—One pound round steak, 1 pint milk, 1 cup flour, 1 egg, salt and pepper. Cut the steak into dice; beat the egg very light; add milk to it and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt and pepper to suit the taste. Pour upon the flour gradually, beating very light and smooth. Butter a two-quart dish and in it put the meat, seasoned well, and pour over it the batter. Bake one hour in a moderate oven and serve hot. Can be made with mutton or lamb in the place of steak.

Rhubarb and Fig Conserve.—Take 6 pounds rhubarb, cut in small pieces, 1 pound dried figs, cut in strips or put through food chopper, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound walnut meats and 5 pounds sugar. Put the sugar over the rhubarb and leave it over night. In the morning cook until thick, then add figs and cook 30 minutes longer. Add walnuts, coarsely chopped, and remove from fire. Put into hot glasses and when cold cover with paraffin. Store in a cool, dark place.

HANDY HINTS

Pour hot water over dates; this removes the stickiness, also cleanses them thoroughly.

When filling gem pans, leave one of the small sections and fill with water; prevents them from scorching.

To keep cheese from moulding wrap in cloth dipped in vinegar and place in covered dish.

When cooking doughnuts drop a few whole cloves in the hot fat; gives a nice flavor.

When your molasses is not dark as desired, add a teaspoon of melted chocolate to your mixture; gives it a delightful flavor.

A decided change is given angel cake if extract of rose is used instead of vanilla.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. H. A. Stevens, 25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Stevens, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send those to the Book Club to be printed here.

SPECIAL NOTICES

It will greatly aid those who are sending books, magazines, cards, and so forth, if all our correspondents who send requests for their children will take pains to mention their names and ages. Lacking such information, one is likely to make mistakes; for a boy of twelve and a girl of seven are not usually interested in the same things.

When requesting books for the first time, correspondents should always give, as reference, the name and address of their clergyman.

When correspondents move to a new address, notice should be sent either to our headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or to those persons who have been sending books and magazines.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word. We do not undertake to send correspondents money, clothing or household goods. Letters asking for that sort of assistance cannot receive attention. Letters not signed cannot be printed.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

Those who enjoy receiving books and magazines are asked to remember that they, in their turn, can give much pleasure if they will take pains to write to the persons who send such reading matter. In cases where no word of response goes back—not even to say that the books or magazines were received—senders may suppose the parcels were not welcome. Let us each do our share.

APPEALS

1. Mrs. Roy Stanton, Green Cove, Va., wishes to send her thanks for the *Cheerful Letter* magazine which is being sent her each month. It certainly does its part in bringing her happiness. She would enjoy some books and papers, and cards for the children. Embroidery and crocheting material would also be acceptable.

2. I wish to thank all my *Cheerful Letter* friends who have been so kind to me and my five children. I would be glad to correspond with all who care to write, as we live a way off from anyone. I could use some quilt scraps. Mrs. Sallie Luster, R. 1, Era, Texas.

3. Mrs. Moore Altman, R. 1, Putney, Ga., writes that her aunt is in better health now. Mrs. Altman makes the request for some quilt scraps.

4. Mrs. Joe Dodd, R. 2, Sandidges, Va., is anxious to see her letter published. She would like an album for pictures and a book called "The Way Home," by D. L. Moody.

5. I will write to thank you all for the things you sent us. We have moved from Dabney, Ark. I would be glad to get some magazines and sewing material, and something for the children: boys, 15, 3, and girls, 13, 10, 7, 3. Mrs. Luther L. Pack, Ft. Cobb, Okla.

6. I would appreciate any reading matter for

me and my mother. We are both widows, and are unable to secure any books or magazines. Mrs. Claudia Webster, R. 2, Ferrum, Va.

7. Mrs. T. A. Campbell, R. 2, Box 7, Crumpler, N. C., is confined at home most of the time, and she would like some crocheting, embroidery thread and quilt pieces. She thanks all her friends for their kind tokens of friendship.

8. Just a few lines to thank the good people for what they have done for me. I hope they don't forget me, as I live in such a lonely place. I am the mother of four boys and one girl. I would like to receive some letters and quilt scraps. Mrs. J. M. Langston, Leo, Cook Co., Texas.

9. Mrs. Lilla Smith, R. 1, Sandy Ridge, N. C., is a shut-in and would appreciate some embroidery work and reading matter. Thanks go to all who remembered her and the children.

10. Mrs. Morris Thomas, R. 2, Box 47, Polkton, N. C., has not heard from any *Cheerful Letter* friends for a long time. She would appreciate some quilt pieces, embroidery thread and reading matter.

11. My thanks for what the *Cheerful Letter* friends have sent me, and I hope they will remember me with books and quilt pieces this summer. I appreciate every bit of cheer the friends send. Mrs. R. J. Blevins, R. 1, Box 49, Rugby, Va.

12. I have received several packages with the names torn off, so I take this way of thanking

everybody who remembered me. Our mail is carried horseback when the roads are bad, and this is very hard on packages. I enjoy the reading very much, and I wish you all could see the quilts that I am making from the scraps. I get very lonely, and I would be very glad to hear from anyone who cares to write. Mrs. Annie Swain, Dabney, Van Buren Co., Ark.

13. *Cheerful Letter* friends will be glad to learn that Mrs. Jane Blackburn, whom they have known for more than thirty years, who was seriously ill the first half of last year, is gradually regaining her usual health, and that she will be so thankful to again get in touch with her old friends. For the past several years her home has been situated in Malta, Ohio, but since April 1 it is Chesterhill, Ohio.

14. Mrs. Cora Harris wants her address changed to Spray, N. C., Box 455. It was Stuart, Va. She is so grateful for "The Beacon" and the other articles.

15. Please give a poor shut-in a little space in your paper. I have been ill since January, 1928, and am not able to walk, just sit up in bed some. Any kind of cheer will be welcome. Mrs. Pattie Jefferson, Dodson, Va.

16. Mrs. Baxter Neaves, Jefferson, N. C., is suffering with blindness. Her girls would appreciate some bits of ribbon and thread to piece quilts out of. Thanks go to those who remembered them at Christmas time.

17. I would like to receive copies of *Successful Farming*. We are back on the farm for the remainder of the year, and I would like you to print this letter of thanks and new address. Mrs. F. M. Martin, R. B, Waxahachie, Texas.

18. Mrs. Sarah Ann Harmon, Dabney, Ark., broke her leg, last August, and has walked with crutches ever since. This April a cyclone swept her home away, ruining everything. Members of her family were badly injured, and she certainly needs cheer of any kind. Her reference is Rev. Hughie Pratt, Rex, Ark.

19. I would be glad to receive any kind of adventure stories and reading matter that may be available from the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange. My wife would like to receive books or pamphlets on the care of babies. For reference, Rev. Arthur Ashely, Smethport, N. C. S. S. Graybeal, Creston, N. C.

20. I want to thank the kind lady who is sending me the *Ladies' Home Journal*. I certainly enjoy it, and my friends do, too. A young man, I know, would like some western stories, so send them to me and I will pass them along. Some embroidery thread would be handy. Mrs. H. H. Foster, Post, Texas.

21. Mrs. T. H. Dunovant, Spencer, Va., lives in the country, thirteen miles from any city, with three girls, 3, 10, 16, and two boys. She would highly appreciate a few quilt pieces, thread or

fancy work, and possibly some reading for the children.

22. I am a young married woman with two children, a boy, 3, and a baby girl, 9 months. I would like some reading matter of any kind and some quilt scraps. Mrs. Mac Basley, 323 N. Lomar St., Amarillo, Texas.

23. Mrs. Fannie Baldwin, Lansing, N. C., is shut-in, with three small kiddies. Her husband is away a great deal of the time and she gets very lonesome, and would appreciate hearing from a *Cheerful Letter* friend. Quilt scraps and sewing material would be acceptable, too.

24. I wish to thank the *Cheerful Letter* friends for the good books and magazines they have sent me, and I hope they will continue to send me reading matter. I do so enjoy it. Sewing material would help a great deal to pass away the lonely hours. Mrs. Nettie Bragan, R. 2, Ferum, Va.

25. I am a girl of 12 and live on a farm; at home most of the time and get awful lonesome. I certainly would appreciate some magazines, books and other amusements. Miss Georgia E. Shelton, R. 2, Box 65, Dodson, Va.

26. Mrs. R. B. Taylor, R. F. D. 2, Crumpler, N. C., wants you all to know how much she appreciated every little thing that was sent. She would like to hear from some of the friends, if they care to write her, and could use a few more quilt pieces and thread.

27. I am writing for some correspondents because, after moving, I lost trace of all and I do miss them so much, as it is so lonely here. I am nursing an invalid mother of 72, and my father is very feeble. May the dear Lord's blessings rest upon all our dear *Cheerful Letter* workers. Mrs. James Ashely, Vulcan, Orange Co., Va.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Mrs. Luther L. Pack, from Dabney, Ark., to Ft. Cobb, Okla.

Mrs. Jane Blackburn, from Malta, Ohio, to Chesterhill, Ohio.

Mrs. Cora Harris, from Stuart, Va., to Box 455, Spray, N. C.

Mrs. F. M. Martin, to Route B, Waxahachie, Texas.

Mrs. James Ashely, to Vulcan, Orange Co., Va.

It was in the subway. It was during the rush hour. The little man suddenly thought of pickpockets. Thrusting his hand into his pocket he found another hand there ahead of him.

"Get out, you thief."

"Get out yourself!" said the other.

"Say," interrupted a third. "If you two guys will get your hands out of my pocket I'll get off here."—*Columbia Jester*.

ANNUAL REPORT OF SECRETARY OF
CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

It is again the privilege of the secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to submit her annual report for the year 1928-1929. During this time she has attended and kept the minutes of the eight regular meetings of the Exchange. She also has attended the annual meeting, at which she read her annual report. She has sent monthly notices of meetings to Branch chairmen, able to attend them. She has sent requests for annual reports to all chairmen listed in the *Manual*.

In coöperation with Mrs. Stevens, the new chairman of the Exchange, she composed two form letters. One of these, with a copy of *The Cheerful Letter* magazine enclosed, was sent to the president of each Branch which had no *Cheerful Letter* committee, with the intent of encouraging the formation of one. One of the other type, with a magazine enclosed, was sent to each Branch, where there was a chairman, with the express purpose of increasing the number of subscriptions to the magazine. The suggestion was made that each Branch strive to procure two new subscribers. The response to both letters was gratifying. Numerous chairmen were appointed; inactive committees became revived; requests for help and suggestions were frequently received. There has been a net gain of more than two hundred in the number of yearly subscriptions to the magazine. It is to be hoped that this will be held next year and that a similar increase may be made. If Branch chairmen formed the habit of including now and then an excerpt from the magazine in their monthly reports, their hearers might be inspired to subscribe to it.

It will readily be seen that the preparation of the aforementioned letters and the addressing of the needed envelopes added greatly to the secretary's routine work. Also the resulting questions from interested chairmen increased tremendously the number of letters, which she has written. Purposely she has kept no record of their number, lest their aggregate appall her. The healthy growth in the Exchange's activities has more than repaid her for the many hours given to its correspondence.

Another innovation has been the preparation of a sheet of suggestions for *Cheerful Letter* workers. Through the kindness of the Dedham and Hingham chairmen, and a member of the Reading Branch, typewritten copies of this have been made available. These have been appreciated by old as well as new chairmen. They have saved your chairman and secretary much writing.

The Exchange has held meetings on the first Friday of each month, from October to May in-

clusive, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. Mrs. Harry A. Stevens has presided at seven of these. In her necessary absence Miss Edith L. Jones took her place at the January meeting. Mrs. Stevens has shown great ability in her organization of the Exchange.

The average attendance at these meetings has been forty-nine with an average number of thirty-eight Branches represented. Sixty-four Branches have been represented at least once. The April meeting, with sixty-one present, was the largest. Waltham holds the record for the greatest total of members present. If other chairmen followed that example and brought friends to an occasional Boston meeting, their interest would almost certainly be stimulated. The secretary suggests that more distant chairmen plan *once* during the year to come to a regular meeting. The hour of its beginning, 10.30 A.M., would not mean too early a start for many. It always is adjourned promptly at noon in time for the King's Chapel service, and an afternoon in Boston offers pleasure and profit. Best of all, the hour and a half spent in the American Unitarian Association Building will be sure to yield much of inspiration and suggestion to be taken away.

During the year three faithful Branch chairmen, Mrs. Oliver M. Fisher of Newton Channing, Miss L. A. Decker of Salem Second and Mrs. William L. Walker of Fitchburg have been called home. Their names are held in grateful memory.

When Mrs. Stevens became chairman of the Exchange, the direction of the Library Department, which she had so ably developed, of necessity passed into other hands. Mrs. Henry R. Bowser, who had previously been the enthusiastic chairman of the committee of the First Parish Church, Cambridge, has proved a worthy successor. In Mrs. Bowser's annual report as chairman of the Library Committee, the coöperation and friendly assistance of Branch chairmen, without which she could have done nothing, is stressed. She gives an idea of the volume of her business by the statement that she has in ten months written 263 letters.

Excerpts from her report follow: "The season's work began with a general check-up of all names on the library lists. It proved a great benefit to me in helping me pick up the threads leading in many, diverse directions. As a result some names were dropped either because the member of the family most interested had died, or because the reply was not sufficiently satisfactory to warrant sending further books. A number of letters were returned unclaimed, while others remained unanswered. However, a considerable number of worthy people came to light, who had fallen into obscurity, and who had received nothing for a period of years.

"People, who said that all the books in their library had been read, were asked if they could transfer the volumes to addresses in near-by towns before receiving new supplies themselves. I found them ready to coöperate. I was pleased to have a woman in the North Carolina Mountains express great solicitude because she was unable to extract two books from another woman to whom they had been lent. Poor as she was, she offered to pay us their value. I emphasized to her that we expected people to do their best in caring for our books, but as she surely had done all she could, we did not want her to pay, and I thanked her for her care. There is such a narrow margin between allowing our people to think that we are ladies bountiful, who do not care what happens, and making libraries a burden to them.

"A number of transfers have been effected, more are pending, and a dozen additional are to be suggested. Because of the old members unearthed, the new libraries have been fewer than otherwise would have been the case, as old friends have been served first. There have been started 17 new libraries, several of which are not yet adequately supplied, and there is a waiting list of applicants. This year books have been sent to 92 active libraries.

"There is greater activity in Arkansas than formerly. From Georgia, which State is acquiring a modern educational system, come requests for advanced as well as elementary books. School libraries need help, that new consolidated schools may become accredited on the State list, which requires a library of a size in proportion to the number of pupils. North Carolina is waking up, and her mountain people are eager for books. Virginia in the rural districts is still extremely backward, and usually asks for very elementary books. There, accredited high schools seem far away.

"This year as recipient of *Cheerful Letter* libraries North Carolina held first place, Massachusetts second, Georgia third, Virginia fourth, New York fifth with New Mexico, Arkansas, and Mississippi tying for sixth place. The donations in Massachusetts and New York went to the Merchant Marine, settlement house centres, children's hospitals, and similar worthy institutions, which form a department of our work different from that in more rural States.

"Speaking of Arkansas, it is my ambition to get our churches all over the country interested in *Cheerful Letter* work. So, they may take charge of our far away addresses. Many large and prosperous Western alliances have no *Cheerful Letter* committees. Slowly but surely I hope to get them enthusiastic over our great and vital work. By having libraries taken care of by the nearest Alliances, *Cheerful Letter* money would go the farthest and the maximum of efficiency be attained. I am happy to announce that our

Branches in Montreal, Canada, Pomona, San Jose, and Stockton, California, Omaha, and St. Louis are now actively taking charge of assignments in their sections. I hope that next year this list of Branches will be trebled.

"The most difficult problem confronting me has been the placing of a valuable memorial library of new books offered by Mrs. D. Frederic Potter of Buffalo, N. Y., in memory of her sister. She will add new volumes each year. Clearly, such a magnificent gift could not be trusted to any community likely to be shiftless in the permanent care of it. To find responsible people, who were also in need, was difficult. A personal friend of mine, the daughter of a former Harvard professor, and now the wife of a ranchman in the Canadian Northwest, whom she nursed in France during the war, was appealed to. She replied with a most thrilling letter. The people there are a fine, sturdy lot of pioneers, leading hard lives in a difficult climate. She wrote that she could tell tales to make me weep,—of educated women, who do not see other women all winter and who are without books or telephone. Their husbands go to town fairly regularly with cream, produce, and live-stock, but the weather is too severe and the roads too bad for the women to travel. In Pincher Creek, Alberta, the so-called 'large town' for a region forty miles in any direction, Mrs. Potter's library will be placed. In school districts, centres in a small way, twenty miles or so out of Pincher, we shall place smaller circulating libraries. Next fall I expect to start a drive of modest dimensions. Among our Western and Canadian Alliances for the benefit of these worthy communities, so lacking in opportunity."

Mrs. Bowser closes her report with the cheering information that 6,723 books have been sent to 92 libraries in twenty States this year. Thirty-eight Branches participated in this work. All Soul's Church, New York, heads the list with 2,630 books, while Roxbury, First Parish Cambridge, Springfield, and Wellesley Hills follow in the order given.

May your secretary endorse your library chairman's stated intention to interest distant Branches in library work? Every Alliance in the country can participate in this form of *Cheerful Letter* activity. There is no group of women however small, which cannot collect at least half a dozen readable books in good condition. Any Alliance treasury can stand the strain of sending them to the nearest of your libraries. When you get to work with the wonderful enthusiasm of Unitarians, your secretary ventures to predict that you won't stop with six books, for you will desire to have a greater share in helping the poor and isolated get their chance at the educative and leavening influence of wholesome reading. Won't every one of you present at this Annual Meeting

take back to your Branch the thought that there is an opportunity awaiting Alliance women everywhere to aid in giving access to books to people otherwise unable to obtain it? You like to think of the United States as a highly civilized country, yet it has hundreds and probably thousands of towns without public libraries. Let your slogan for the coming year be, "One thousand books a month for *Cheerful Letter* libraries from one hundred Alliances."

Mrs. Sands, the chairman of the Home Study Department, reports ninety pupils registered. New pupils have taken the places of those, who have graduated. Your secretary is yearly impressed by the tremendous amount of helpful service given by this committee in comparison with the meagre sum of money available. Of the \$60.75 spent this year, \$4.75 was collected at a *Cheerful Letter* Conference for the purchase of dictionaries at 25 cents each, \$10 were contributed by Branches for three subscriptions to the *Popular Primary Magazine*, and one to the *Mentor*, besides a donation toward a text book for a young girl. Of the remaining \$46, which were used for postage, \$16 came from personal friends of Mrs. Sands and the balance from three Branches, and the *Cheerful Letter* appropriation from the General Alliance.

Mrs. Sands remarks that at least a beginning has been made toward the raising of the \$200 annually for her work, which your secretary recommended in her last year's report. The latter feels that very many more Alliances ought to help the hard-working chairman and her corps of teachers. Forty-four Branches have donated books. What have the other ones done? Not every one by any means has a member, who is able to undertake the teaching of a distant pupil, not every one can send school books, but every one can include in its budget one dollar toward the expenses of the Home Study Department. What a difference those dollars coming in from the North and South and West to the Atlantic seaboard will make in Mrs. Sands' yearly report! Your secretary has now suggested something to make possible the undertaking of *Cheerful Letter* work by even the smallest and most overburdened group without too much effort—i.e., the collection and sending of a few books to one of the libraries and the donation of one dollar for the use of the Home Study chairman.

Mrs. Sands shall tell you of some of her pupils in her own words: "A young girl, whose grandfather has studied Latin with great profit through our correspondence department, has lost so much time from school, that she needs help to keep up with her grade. Through the efforts of Mrs. Stevens the proper books have been obtained, and she will be helped to study during the summer. This is one case among eleven boys and girls, who will study with us this summer, hoping

to make their grades in the fall. One of these boys from Amherst, Va., is taking the place of his brother, who for several years was our student and who now has a good position in a paper mill. Their mother is registered in our Mother's Department; so we feel we are working with the whole family.

"Of the twenty mothers on our list, five are taking reading courses, ten are studying English, one is teaching her husband with our help, and fourteen are discussing articles sent in booklets to them each month. Our student teachers number thirty. Fourteen of these are taking courses to prepare for a higher grade of work, five are studying advanced English and History, nine are taking Current Events courses, while three are receiving the *Primary Education Magazine* monthly. Some also receive Angelo Patri's articles. Eight of the remaining young people live in the vicinity of Alpharetta, Ga. A good friend in Georgia, who has offered to help all pupils in that State, will be of great assistance in investigating cases and finding just what their needs are.

"A very interesting Arkansas pupil is a ten-year-old girl, whose mother is intelligent and educated. The girl has missed a year of school, and in all probability her health will not permit her to travel the long distance next year. Her mother coöperates with us in instructing her and already amazing results have been obtained.

"Imagine what it must mean to a lonely, eager boy to receive the *Popular Mechanics* and the *National Geographic*! One hundred and fifty-four of the former have been sent to boys this year: many of them were contributed by a member of the Winthrop Branch. Hundreds of lessons, which the boys just love, are based upon articles in the *Geographic* and *Mentor* magazines. *The Literary Digest* is also used in preparing lessons. First Parish, Cambridge, has contributed a large number of these magazines.

"Ted Welch, who has been our pupil for six years, has graduated and entered business. Practically all his education since fifth grade came through us. He writes, 'I should never have been able to obtain the position I hold now, had it not been for the *Cheerful Letter* Home Study Committee.'"

Mrs. Sands reports that this year for her work 1,145 books have been donated by forty-four Alliances and the Lend-a-Hand Society. This is an increase of 36 per cent over last year's number. While no accurate account of magazines sent can be kept, records show 1,685 reported. Pictures by the hundreds have gone to schools, and clippings have been sent by the literal thousand. Each month the Branches of Medford, Waltham, Winchendon, and Dorchester First Parish have reported work accomplished, to Mrs. Sands. The yearly box of splendid material from Provi-

dence First Congregational Society is a great help. This year two boxes came. An unusually fine, modern reading course, consisting of lectures and topics for discussion was given by Cambridge First Parish.

Mrs. Sands closes her report thus: "At Christmas time the usual book and new card was sent to each pupil. Many Alliances helped by sending one or several books, according to their means. Your chairman wishes she might name every Alliance and person, who has helped her this year. As this is impossible, she wishes to thank you all. It has been because of your increased activity that so much more work has been accomplished recently. She asks your continued coöperation that you and she may be of even greater service the coming year."

Mrs. William B. Nichols has shown her continued interest in the Exchange by undertaking the distribution of Bibles. She has sent during the year nine new Bibles and twenty-four new New Testaments.

Miss Edith L. Jones reports that "once again the contributions from the sunshine bags have met the expense of editing and have paid the deficit to date for publishing *The Cheerful Letter* magazine. A goodly sum has been collected. This has been done with the coöperation of the chairmen in their various Branches by bringing to the members the interest and vision of the service rendered by this little paper—a messenger of good will, a friendly visitor each month."

All Souls' Church, New York, leads in the total collected with Wollaston, Mass., a close second. The following, all of Massachusetts, in the order given lead the rest—Boston First, Hingham, Meeting House Hill, Dorchester, and Boston Second.

This loyal response from the friends of the work shows the general esteem in which the magazine is held. It is the official organ of the Exchange. Its column of appeals forms the basis of the activities of many a worker. Its well selected sermon, its department, "With Our Home Keepers," its "Good Health Notes," contributed by the Central Committee on Social Service, its "Page For Children," its poetry, and its amusing and instructive articles carry pleasure and comfort to many a shut-in. Your officers bespeak your continued support of it.

In response to her requests, your secretary received annual reports from 151 Branch chairmen. This gain of 23 per cent over last year shows the interest stimulated by the letters sent out in the fall. In spite of this increase, reports have not come in from nearly two-fifths of the chairmen listed in the *Manual*. This your secretary deeply regrets, for undoubtedly every one of these delinquents has done creditable work, which might have been recorded to swell the

general whole. She also regrets the vague terms in which many reports are couched. How is she to tabulate "five automobile loads of magazines," for example? She cannot include them in her total at all. She is sorry also not to be able to place in her final reckoning the 360 pounds of reading sent by the Branch at Alameda, Calif., to the Disciplinary Barracks on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay—a most worth-while work. These are but two cases out of many. The climax was reached in a report, which recorded the sending of more than one thousand magazines, but which mentioned the name of neither Branch nor chairman and which had no decipherable post mark.

You may, therefore, rest assured that the figures quoted are very much smaller than the actual amount should be. It seems almost too bad to mention any numbers at all, for the vast majority of chairmen have expressed their regret that the quantity of work they have accomplished is so small, when to your secretary it seems most overwhelming. After all, the chairman with no helpers in a small Alliance, who writes fortnightly letters to five correspondents, is just as worthy of praise and has perhaps given more of her time and herself than the chairman in the city church, who reports an aggregate of more than 6,000 articles sent.

The chairman of All Souls' Church, New York, reports the amazing total of 34,761 articles sent out this year. This far exceeds the total of any other Branch and is deserving of the warmest commendation. Your secretary is here constrained to quote from Mrs. Bowser, who writes "I agree with Mrs. Stevens that Mrs. Brush's success is not all due to the wealth of All Souls Church. While that is undeniably an important factor, Mrs. Brush herself must have great qualities of leadership and marked administrative ability. Also, the parish must be made up of live people, as no parish, however rich, that was dead and gone to seed, could ever produce 34,000 items of *Cheerful Letter* work. Very great credit, however, is due the smaller Alliances that have produced results out of all proportion to their size. I have been in the habit of noticing the numerical strength of Alliances in the year book. I consider that the true standard is accomplishment in relation to size."

The following Branches are given in the order of the number of articles sent—Providence First Congregational, Brookline First, Newport, Hingham, Lexington, Needham, Dorchester, First Newton Channing, and Cambridge First. The chairman of Dorchester Channing Branch, who has alone sent 1,246 articles to 49 families, writes "I feel I've had a busy and useful year, that still hold my old friends, and have gained many fine, new ones. I hope to be able 'to carry on in the good work.'"

This year 48,414 magazines, not including *The Cheerful Letter* or *The Christian Register*, have been distributed by workers. This is an increase of 15,316 over last year—a remarkable gain. Many of these periodicals were distributed by automobile to local institutions. Flatbush Alliance of Brooklyn has delivered 2,800 magazines to the Sailors' Reading Room, maintained by the City Y. M. C. A. Many correspondents receive their magazines directly from the publishers. Some two hundred such were reported. Wollaston and Waltham Branches have most generously adopted this scheme, giving forty and twenty-three yearly subscriptions respectively.

In spite of the fact that comparatively few women find time to sew and produce many scraps, chairmen have despatched 1,520 parcels of quilt pieces as against 760 similar ones last year, a gain of 100 per cent. Not all the quilts are made in the South, for in Melrose a sewing class of young girls, not over fourteen years, meet every Tuesday afternoon in the Parish House to make patchwork squares, which will be quilted and sold in the fall for the benefit of *Cheerful Letter* work and the Church Building Fund.

Even more generously than before, members have remembered the isolated and needy at Christmas. Who can measure the joy, which the contents of the 733 Christmas boxes carried into as many homes last December? Many of these were sent to make possible community or rural school trees, and in such cases often held gifts for from fifty to one hundred people. It is a conservative estimate that seven thousand individuals, the majority of whom were children, through your agency were made happy at Yuletide. Your secretary feels that if the Exchange sponsored only this one activity, its reason for being would be adequate. If space permitted, a numeration of the variety of gifts offered would be of interest. Suffice it to say that packages, attractively wrapped, contained more new things than ever before, that candy was included frequently, and that cards by the tens of thousands found places in boxes. The remark of the Brookline Second chairman that "their friend Woolworth has been as helpful as ever" is echoed by your secretary. She quite thrilled a child in her neighborhood, when she showed her the array of gifts for *Cheerful Letter* boxes purchased in the ten-cent store for about \$10. They included stocked pencil boxes, strings of colorful beads, pins, cuff buttons, a fine variety of games, including fascinating assortments of stencils, painting books, crayons, wooden and iron toys, dolls, dressed effectively in a few minutes, toy furniture, dolls' dishes and dozens of other things to delight the hearts of small folks. For grown brothers and sisters and mothers and fathers there were perpetual pencils, erasers, boxes of stationery, calendars, candles and sticks, colored

glass dishes, vases, neckties, coat flowers, and many other articles. No wonder "thank you letters" are frequently received like the one which the Quincy chairman happily read from an Arkansas mother, who wrote, "Yours was the first box my children had ever received and they were so tickled they almost had spells. You must be a sweet woman."

At Christmas many committees remember friends near at hand. East Boston sends bowls of bulbs, wreaths, or baskets of fruit to shut-ins. An invalid gets much pleasure from a gay wreath hanging in the window at which she daily looks. Quincy sends a handkerchief with a suitable card to each Alliance member, who has left the city. Medford specializes in baskets of jellies and goodies for the old people of the parish.

You will all agree with the Waltham chairman, who says, "One of the most encouraging things about *Cheerful Letter* work is the way correspondents of several years' standing enter into the spirit of it. One such woman, who gets up a community tree each year, sent to us just before Christmas the address of an aged couple who are lonely and would appreciate cheer of any kind. After receiving our box of suitable gifts, the pair replied, 'You know the old appreciate being thought of—they are so often forgotten.'"

It is comparatively easy for your secretary to tabulate and report upon those parts of the work in which many committees participate. When it comes to giving a fair idea of the remainder, which forms just as important a portion and where individual initiative is very apparent, the task becomes difficult. She can only attempt to outline a fraction of this, of course.

Some Branches specialize in scrapbooks with the purpose of educating, amusing, or delighting the eye of the recipient. Hingham leads in the number of these made. The Wollaston chairman reports that, "We tried to make our scrapbooks for the most part educational. The topics we used are as follows: Modern Poetry, Science and Invention, Nature, Industries, Marine, Art, Architecture, Sculpture, Domestic Geography, Foreign Geography, Sports, Aviation, Music, Biography, History, and Cartoons." The Junior groups of some Alliances take an active part in the work. The Detroit Juniors have adopted a baby, to whom gifts were sent at Christmas. In contrast the Providence First Congregational chairman reports two active workers over ninety.

Some chairmen, like the Sandwich one, have no regular correspondents, but each month answer a number of requests in the magazine, thus experiencing the variety, which is the "spice of life." The Somerville chairman prefers to write friendly letters to the same women, thus really knowing a few rather than writing to many, who will remain strangers. Many other workers feel

the same. Fall River, for example, sends regularly each month to eight correspondents. Poughkeepsie does the same for its four friends.

In the smaller Branches the chairman frequently carries the burden of the work alone. It is to be hoped that subsequently many will follow the example of the organization of the Cambridge First Group, whose leader thus describes it, "Each member—there are eight of us—was given a definite assignment to which each one without exception has faithfully applied herself. One member answered appeals, another made and sent scrapbooks, others devoted themselves to the regular distribution of books and magazines to libraries, to community centres, to seamen, to lighthouses, and to individuals, in addition to letters to correspondents. At the monthly meetings each one reported on her individual responsibility. The work has gone forward without undue pressure on any one person. Such diligence and conscientious support is a matter of profound appreciation to any chairman."

From Fairhaven comes the word, "All five of us have enjoyed the work and are ready to serve again." Brookline Second chairman writes that her Alliance members have been helpful, generous, and encouraging.

To your secretary it is encouraging to note that increasingly many Branches make fairly liberal appropriations for the use of their *Cheerful Letter* committees. The chairman of All Souls' Church, New York, obtains splendid response to postals, soliciting aid for her work, which are sent to the parish list. Providence First Congregational Committee receives an ample sum from the Branch but, like others, resorts to expedients to increase it. That chairman described a successful affair thus, "We gave a 'Silver Tea' in November to raise funds for Christmas boxes for Decoy, Ky., a branch of Hindman School. For entertainment there was a lecture with stereopticon views of missionary work in India by Mrs. Rose. It was a charming tea, well attended, which netted a substantial increase to our treasury." Another worker reports giving a "Silver Coffee." Many find the premiums paid for magazine subscriptions easy to obtain. The usual cake, candy, and rummage sales have flourished. One chairman, at least, has made money from unusable material given her. She obtained a considerable sum from a second-hand dealer, for old books, out of print. She advises every one to scrutinize carefully all books printed early in the last century and to let an expert pass upon their value.

From the number of reports, admitting the sending of clothes South, your secretary has come to the reluctant conclusion that the only way to make the Exchange function as it should, is *never* to make an exception and send clothes and money. A great work can be done in the

legitimate way. The Marlborough chairman says, "It is sometimes a task to make correspondents understand that we do not give money or commodities. When this is made clear, trouble ceases. This worker establishes real friendships by frequent, intimate letters." The Indianapolis chairman, who understands the necessity for the rule against sending material aid, writes, "While I have a few correspondents, who may beg a little too much, the majority seem to be trying very hard. Yet the boll weevil gets the best of them; their turkeys, which they painstakingly raise, bring only twelve cents a pound at Thanksgiving or two sons, who go to the mines of West Virginia, come back unwanted. No wonder these folks write me, 'I get so blue sometimes, I don't know what to do.' I marvel at the courage, which makes them add, 'I suppose God knows what is best.' When I write them extracts from books they answer, 'Tell us more. We need your letters.'"

So, let us adopt the sort of correspondents that write to the Lexington chairman, "I sure am glad of what you send me, things to busy my hands and things to bring me new thoughts from your part of the world." Think of helping a woman of the type that assures the Reading chairman that she knows no one else could be gladder to get the papers, which were the first that she had ever had in her house, from which anyone may know what a poor home she had." Surely the satisfaction is worth while, which must come to the Pittsburgh chairman from sending books to a twenty-one-year-old mother, who writes, "It cheers me up to know that some one thinks of me, even if I am in poor health. I have tuberculosis in both lungs and must take a rest cure; it will be eleven months before I can get up. It is awfully hard on the children."

The Hingham chairman writes that it has been a real privilege to help a group of young girls, organized into a club, the object of which is to earn money for their struggling church in Tennessee, and also to aid a Christian Endeavor Society by sending thimbles and materials for its sewing class. She further says, "It has been somewhat discouraging to respond to an appeal and have the letter of acknowledgment accompanied by a request that we continue to give,—as one woman wrote, 'Please remember me when you do your spring housecleaning. I am poor and can use anything.' Such requests are offset by a letter of thanks from the mother of two little girls, saying that they divided the contents of their Christmas package with children, who had no gifts at all. It was a joy to send them a package of valentines for distribution and also a box of Easter eggs, chickens, candy, and cards."

The Billerica chairman writes, "I feel as if I have joined a large family from whom I have re-

ceived more than I have given." From Hackensack comes the statement, "I was indeed happy when one correspondent showed her interest by sending fifty stamps for *Cheerful Letter* use. The pleasure this work has given us cannot be expressed in mere words. We hope to strengthen still further in the year ahead these friendships which mean so much to us." Lebanon feels it a privilege to have a correspondent, who writes of a killing frost, "I am not complaining, for I have many things to be thankful for. I have my little boy, and my husband is real good to me. I suppose most people like to have plenty. I do, but I find it takes other things besides riches to make people happy."

The North Andover chairman closed her report with this bit of poetry from your magazine, which contains advice for all *Cheerful Letter* workers,

"Build for yourself a strong box,
Fasten each part with care.
When it's strong as your heart can make it,
Put all your troubles there.
Lock in it all thoughts of failure,
Each bitter cup that you quaff,
Hide in it all your heartaches,
Then sit on the lid and laugh."

Respectfully submitted,
ETHEL LANE HERSEY, *Secretary.*

"GOOD HEALTH" NOTES

"MEAT EXTENDERS"

As substitutes for large amounts of meats, perhaps beyond the scale of the family budget, Miss Stella Patton, Home Economics Department, Wisconsin College of Agriculture, advises the use of "Meat Extenders," prepared in such ways that those partaking, unconscious of their presence, shall have meat appetites satisfied.

"Kol Dolmer," a Scandinavian dish, is particularly recommended. "To make it, cook $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of rice until it is tender, then add $\frac{1}{4}$ pound of ground beef, 1 egg, and salt and pepper to taste. Separate the leaves from a head of cabbage and boil for 20 minutes. Put a tablespoon of rice mixture in each cabbage leaf. Roll up the leaves and place in a baking dish with a good measure of fat on the bottom of the baking dish and on the top of the rolls. Bake $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours and baste frequently with a sauce made by combining 3 tablespoons vinegar, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon cornstarch and 3 tablespoons water."

According to Miss Patton, many families like rice combinations with meat, as ground ham, mixed with rice and flavored with tomatoes. Beef stew, cooked with a great many vegetables, lends a meaty flavor that appeals especially to growing boys.

VEGETABLE DINNERS

The New Jersey State Food Specialist of the College of Agriculture, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, recommends selection of vegetables harmonizing in color and blending in flavors, but which vary in texture.

"Buttered peas and carrots, cooked together or separately, beets with sour sauce, scalloped potatoes with cheese and cabbage salad, with cherry pie for the older members of the family and cherry juice for the children," are proposed as desirable for one dinner. For another day the specialist suggests "battered string beans, cauliflower with cheese sauce, spinach, lettuce and tomato salad, and baked custard, served with fresh fruit and crisp cookies. . . . Much of the dislike for vegetables is because of poor preparation. Steam as many vegetables as possible in order to prevent the loss of mineral elements. Cook vegetables in a small amount of water and *only* until *tender*, as the longer the cooking is continued the greater will be the loss in flavor and in vitamins. Most vegetables retain more of their characteristic flavor if served with butter, rather than with white sauce, but for variety now and then a white sauce or cheese sauce may be enjoyed. Vegetables supply bulk and thereby satisfy the appetite without burdening the body with foods rich in starch and fat which produce heat. Hot weather demands a generous use of vegetables and fruits in planning meals."—*From the New York Times.*

SHUT-INS ALL

The following should appeal to readers living in apartments and tend to make those fortunate persons able to spread out in houses and gardens appreciate their blessings:

"The walls are shrinking about us, as they did about the victim of the Pit and the Pendulum. Once upon a time our feet, like the Psalmists', were set in a large room. We all know that they are no longer. . . . Twenty years ago the average was more than four rooms. Today it is a fraction over three. In 1918 not a single one-room apartment house was built in the city. Last year saw 888 of them erected. . . . Are families splitting up, . . . or are small apartments being rented nowadays by persons who lived in boarding houses? If so, what has become of the old ladies in bombazine who used to make a living out of them?

"The needs of business women may partially explain so many small apartments, but as the marriage rate is higher than it was ten years ago, they are not due to falling off of weddings. However, children are fewer. Perhaps the dwellers in more flats are able to get along without nursery facilities!"—*Taken from editorial, New York Times, on statistics of Major Caccavajo.*

AT SIXTY-TWO

Just sixty-two? Then trim thy light
 And get thy jewels all reset.
 'Tis past meridian, but still bright,
 And lacks some hours of sunset yet.
 At sixty-two
 Be strong and true.
 Scour off thy rust and shine anew.

'Tis yet high day, thy staff resume,
 And fight fresh battles for the truth;
 For what is age but youth's full bloom,
 A ripen, more transcendent youth.
 A wedge of gold
 Is never old;
 Streams broader grow as downward rolled.

At sixty-two life is begun,
 At seventy-three begin once more;
 Fly swiftly as you near the sun,
 And brighter shine at eighty-one.

AT NINETY-FIVE

Should you arrive
 Still wait on God, and work and thrive.

Keep thy locks wet with morning dew,
 And freely let thy graces flow;
 For life well spent is ever new,
 And years anointed younger grow.
 So work away,
 Be young for aye,
 From sunset breaking into day.

(*New York Times Book Review*, attributed to
 Rev. W. A. Desbrisay; first printed in "The
 Calendar," afterwards "The Churchman.")
 LAURA R. DONNELL.

"He caught his toe on the stair."
 "How far'd he chase it?"—*Middlebury Blue
 Baboon.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, through the exchange of letters and by gifts of books and magazines.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To give to those living far from church some of the helps which churches give. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number. These sermons are never doctrinal, but present only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed on by all churches.

WHERE TO WRITE

1. *Letters paying for subscriptions to the paper*, fifty cents a year, should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

2. *Letters asking for correspondents* should be sent to the Chairman, Mrs. H. A. Stevens, 25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

3. *Letters asking for help in studying at home* should be sent to Mrs. George O. Sands, Brimble Ave., North Beverly, Mass.

The Home Study Committee has on hand a variety of schoolbooks which may be used by students either at home or in the schoolroom. The aim of the teachers is to help in any study where help is needed. Often this may fit a person for a higher grade of work.

4. *Letters about the establishment of Circulating Libraries* should be sent to Mrs. Henry R. Bowser, 36 Lancaster St., Cambridge, Mass.

A Circulating Library will be started in any small community needing one, if proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references can be given. Two hundred and thirty-nine are now on our lists.

5. The Secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Miss Ethel L. Hersey, Hingham, Mass., should receive the more general correspondence from workers on the local committees, or from others interested in the organization and its methods.